

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-7 are presently active in this case. Claims 1-5 are amended, and Claims 6-7 are added by the present amendment. Claims 2-5 are amended only to correct minor informalities.

Applicants and Applicants' representatives thank Examiners Gary Solomon and Yen Vu for the courtesies extended to Applicants' representatives during the personal interview conducted on May 13, 2004. During the interview, as reflected in the Interview Summary, the Examiners agreed that the proposed amendments distinguish over Igarashi. Accordingly, Applicants note that independent Claim 7 of the present application reflects the subject matter of the amendments proposed during the interview.

In the outstanding Office Action, FIG. 14 was objected to under MPEP § 608.02(g). The present amendment includes a replacement FIG. 14 labeling FIG. 14 as "Prior Art." Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the objection to FIG. 14. Moreover, new Fig. 15 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of the present invention using a perspective view to describe the configuration of lenses with respect to the imaging device. The new figure is added in light of the Examiner's suggestion during the personal interview.

Additionally, Claims 4 and 5 were objected to because of informalities. Amendments to Claims 4 and 5 address the noted informalities. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the objection to Claims 4 and 5.

Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Igarashi, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,632,172, herein "Igarashi"). Claims 4-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Igarashi in view of Nelson (U.S. Patent No. 5,237,340, herein

“Nelson”) in further view of Booth (U.S. Patent No. 5,738,427, herein “Booth”). For the reasons discussed below, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the art rejections.

As discussed during the personal interview, amended Claim 1 is directed to an imaging apparatus including an imaging device, imaging means that images at least two images of a subject onto different areas of a surface of an imaging device, and electric signal processing means *for electrically synthesizing the at least two images* of the photogenic object *into one integrated image* of the photogenic object. Support for the amendment to Claim 1 can be found at least at FIGs. 1(a), 2, and 3, and at page 7, lines 13 - 25 of the specification. Thus, no new matter is added.

Igarashi describes an endoscope with a pair of positive-lenses 11, 12, and an image pick-up device 8. However, as discussed during the interview, Igarashi describes that endoscopes include a long and thin portion for insertion into a human and provide *two images* (a stereoscopic image including left and right images) for medical observation (Col. 1, lines 12-21). As shown in the figures, including FIG. 1, the pairs of positive lenses 2, 4 are included to provide the stereoscopic image for an endoscope user.

Although Igarashi describes an endoscope for providing two images of a subject, Applicants respectfully submit that Igarashi is silent with regard to at least electronic signal processing means for electrically synthesizing at least two images into one integrated image, as claimed by Applicants. As shown in FIG. 1 of Igarashi, left and right images are received on an image-pick-up device 8 and separated by a distance X. Furthermore, as the objective of the invention of Igarashi is to provide *a stereoscopic image* for medical observation, it is respectfully submitted that there is no motivation to provide electric signal processing means for electrically synthesizing the left and right images into one integrated image. It is also respectfully submitted that providing such means would likely defeat the stated objective of

providing the stereoscopic image. Therefore, Igarashi does not teach or suggest all limitations of amended Claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1 and Claims 2-3 dependent therefrom based on Igarashi.

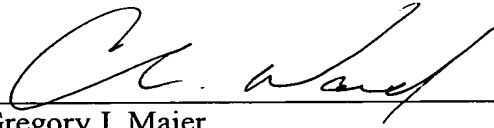
Dependent Claims 4-5 are considered allowable for the reasons advanced for Claim 1 from which they depend. These claims are further considered allowable as they recite other features of the invention that are not disclosed, taught, or suggested by the applied references when those features are considered within the context of Claim 1.

Newly added Claims 6-7 recite features of the invention that are neither disclosed nor suggested by the references of record. For example, Igarashi, Nelson, and Booth do not teach or suggest a lens apparatus that directs at least three images of a subject onto different areas of a surface of an imaging device. The new claims are supported by the original disclosure in substantially the same manner as the original claims. In particular, support for Claim 6 can be found at least at FIGs. 3, 4(a), and 4(b) and Claim 7 was agreed upon during the personal interview as distinguishing over the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that new Claims 6-7 are allowable.

Consequently, in view of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for formal allowance, and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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